

Inventor: Brian Perry
Application No.: 09/872,817; Art Unit 1743; Examiner: Quan, E.S.
RULE 116 AMENDMENT: Page 4

PATENT

REMARKS

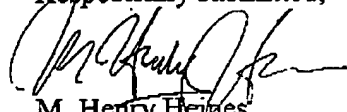
The examiner's suggestion for amending the recitation of the interchangeably accommodating parts in claim 1 has been followed and the same amendment has been made to claim 3. The addition of the word "interlocking" to characterize the male and female parts of the connectors finds support in the specification at page 2, line 5. No new matter is presented by this amendment.

The modifier "interlocking" clarifies the distinction between the male-female connectors of the present invention and those of the Limb patent. However broad one wishes to interpret the dictionary definition of the term "connector," there is nothing in the Limb disclosure to suggest an interlocking connector, which is a special type of connector and is recognized in the art as such. Interlocking connectors are not suggested by an O-ring seal such as that disclosed by the Limb patent. Nor do any of the other cited references (the Franciskovich et al. and Roberts et al. patents) disclose interlocking connectors. Neither in fact disclose connectors at all.

A further distinction is presented by claim 3: the adapter plate having the same dimensions as the multi-well laboratory plate so that either one can be exchanged for the other. None of the references disclose this exchangeability.

In view of the amendment and these distinctions, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of this case in any way, please call the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,


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